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ABSTRACT

Described in this publication is a comprehensive career education program which begins in Grade 1 and continues through Grade 12. Specifically developed for a rural, economically depressed area, the program includes a structuring of basic subjects around the theme of career opportunities and requirements in the world of work. The four segments of the curriculum described in this report are: (1) career awareness--Grades 1-6, (2) career orientation--Grades 7-8, (3) career exploration--Grades 9-10, and (4) career preparation--Grades 11-12. Also discussed in various sections of the document are: (1) Correlation of Academic Subjects and Use of Experience Based Methodology, (2) Strategies for Change, (3) Evaluation Plans, and (4) Initial Impressions. Data indicate that this career education project is a significant breakthrough in efforts to humanize, individualize, and make more relevant the educational process. Related documents are available as VT 014 729-014 733. (JS)

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ABSTRACT

This publication describes the development and implementation of an Exemplary Project in Career Education. The program was developed, funded and initiated under the provisions of Part D of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. Its title is, "Improving A Rural Area School Program With Expanded Vocational Education Services by Utilizing Comprehensive Career Orientation and Exemplary Activities." The project is funded by the U. S. Office of Education.

This paper has a dual focus. It deals initially with the development of the career education program objectives and curriculum and then moves into a consideration of strategies for introducing this innovative educational venture into a school system with maximum effectiveness.

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I.
INTRODUCTION

The need for innovation in education has never been more apparent than it is today. Our school systems are part of a changing society that creates constantly accelerating demands for new insights into the learning process, new ways of teaching, and workable strategies for relating the traditional academic focus of the classroom to the "real world" outside the schoolhouse walls. Students, parents, teachers, business and civic groups are calling for new ways of applying resources to educational needs, and for experimentation and flexibility in altering obsolete roles, and relationships within school systems in directions that will facilitate more creative and effective resolution of educational problems.

One of the new strategies for meeting these educational challenges is a school curriculum organized around the Career Education theme with correlation of academic subjects, and an opportunity for the student to learn by a more direct and immediate involvement that eliminates the distination between "classroom" and "reality," and brings the "real world" into the classroom. The following pages tell the story of one school system's adventure in educational change.

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Project Director
Lincoln County Career Education Program

II.
BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM

An increasing number of our nation's educators are realizing that the traditional curriculum is failing to reach a sizeable segment of our student population. The assumption that a student can acquire certain basic skills in mathematics, reading, science, etc. which can then be applied to other important areas of his existence has been questioned by school personnel, students, parents and business leaders who have witnessed a growing gap between theoretical knowledge and the application of that knowledge in the "real world." One of the major reasons for this gap seems to be that students often cannot equate the academic program with the world outside the classroom. As a result many students have dropped out of school, with no saleable skill, and no plans for further training, and many of those who remain in school "tune out" the teacher and academic subjects, effectively isolating themselves from any meaningful involvement in the educational process.

A new project in Lincoln County, West Virginia, funded for a three year period as one of the U.S. Office of Educations Exemplary Projects in Career Education, is viewed by Lincoln County educators, business and civic leaders as one of the most important new efforts to meet today's challenging needs for relevancy and innovation in education. At the end of the three year period plans call for the project to be absorbed into the school system as a permanent part of the instructional program.

III.
THE CAREER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Lincoln County Exemplary Project in Career Education is a comprehensive educational program focused on the world of work, which begins in grade one and continues through grade twelve. The program includes a structuring of basic subjects, grades one through twelve, around the theme of career opportunities and requirements in the world of work. In the elementary school, students are informed about the wide range of jobs in our society and the roles and requirements involved in these jobs. In junior high school, students may explore specific clusters of occu-

pations through hands on experiences and field observation, as well as classroom instruction. They will be assisted in selecting an occupational area for further specialization at the senior high level.

In senior high school, students pursue their selected occupational area, exercising one of three options-intensive job preparation for entry into the world of work immediately upon leaving high school, preparation for postsecondary occupational education, or preparation for four year college.

Those students preparing for postsecondary occupational education or four year college entry will continue to be provided occupational cluster experiences including work experience where feasible, with the academic subject areas being related to the professional area for which they are preparing. Students engaging in specialized job preparation will be provided with basic academic skills essential for further education. Consequently every student will leave the school system with at least entry level job skills and with facility in basic academic subjects sufficient to enable entry into institutions of higher learning. Placement into an entry level job or further education for every student is the goal of the Exemplary Career Awareness Project.

Those students engaging in specialized job preparation for immediate job entry upon graduating from high school will be able to select from a broad array of courses to be offered in the Lincoln County Vocational and Technical School which is scheduled to begin with the opening of the 1972 school term. The seven areas of concentrated course work will be offered to the students in a three hour time block segment with the students attending their respective high schools taking three required courses each day so that they obtain certification for graduation by the West Virginia State Department of Education. Courses offered at the Vocational and Technical Center are commercial home economics, industrial cooking, waitress, waiter, housekeeping, nurses aide training, hotel-motel management, stenographic, secretarial, power and auto mechanics, welding, building maintenance, carpentry, bricklaying, blue-print reading, home economics, commercial sewing, including tailoring, dressmaking and other apparel occupations, and adult education courses designed to meet the

identified needs of the community. The Vocational and Technical School will also provide adult night classes leading toward the high school equivalence diploma.

Career education, such as that to be provided by the Exemplary Project, is particularly relevant today, with statistics indicating that for approximately every 100 students entering the first grade in Lincoln County only forty-one graduate from high school, twleve go on to college and only six graduate from college. Most of those who do not graduate from college have had no access to information about the wide range of occupational possibilities and have thus been unable to make any sound judgements about personal job preference, or to obtain any training for specific job skills. The result is unemployment, welfare, or a low paying, unrewarding job. The basic goal of career education is to provide a base of information which can enable each student in Lincoln County to make valid occupational decisions, and to obtain the necessary skills for success in the occupation chosen.

Career education not only provides job information and skill development but also helps students to develop attitudes about the personal, psychological, social, and economic significance of work. Extensive guidance and counseling activities will assist the student to develop self-awareness and match his interest and abilities against potential careers.

IV.
CURRICULUM DIVIDED INTO FOUR SEGMENTS

The Curriculum of the Lincoln County Project is divided into four segments as shown in Figure 1.

Career Awareness (Grades 1-6)

The educational program for the first and second grades begins with the immediate environment and gradually broadens to encompass the larger community environment. The first grade child is introduced to the world of work by investigating and interpreting the working life of members of his immediate family. This is followed by studying workers with whom he comes in contact. The second grader is introduced to new and different kinds of workers in the community, those workers not in his family or at school.

The educational program for grades 3 through 6 is designed to increase occupational horizons from the immediate environment to the larger community. Comparing and contrasting occupations in the immediate area to those found in other communities provide the child with an opportunity to become aware of the encompassing nature of work.

The activities learning approach continues to be the principal method of concept development for the active youngsters. Each concept is presented and re-enforced through meaningful activities suited to the physical and mental maturity of the child in grades 3 through 6. In classes with high levels of deviation, such as handicapped and disadvantaged students, adjustments are necessary to facilitate internalizing functional occupational concepts.

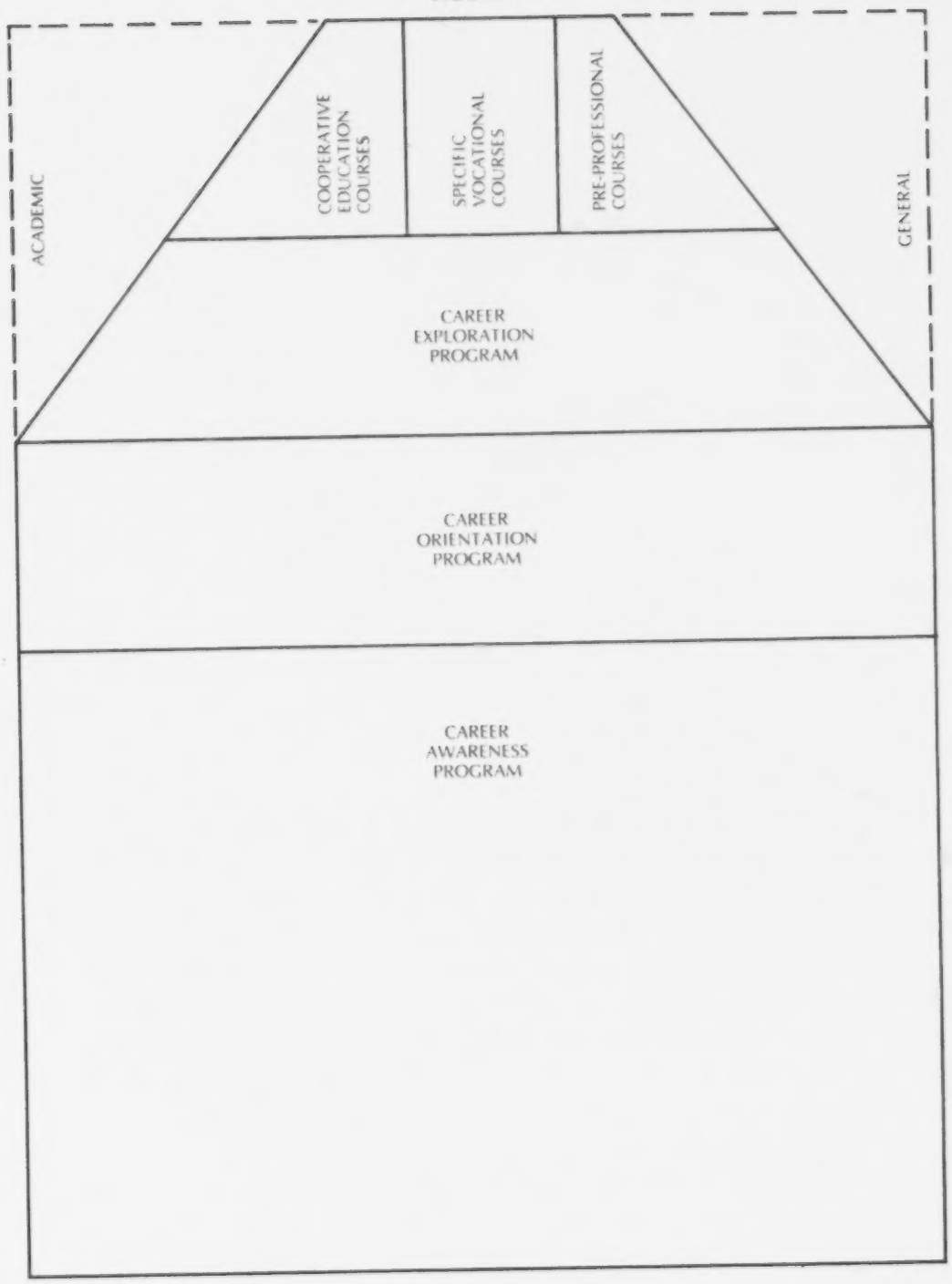
The third grade continues the lower primary approach of total and small group activities under the leadership of the teacher. The fourth grader's efforts and interests are integrated into activity-planning providing for individual differences. The curriculum in grades 5 through 6 will include instruction and experience that will enable the students to develop positive attitudes toward work, identify and choose goals for themselves, and study occupational areas in which they are interested. Figure 2 depicts a model of the occupational focus of each level of the Career Awareness Segment.

Career Orientation (Grades 7-8)

The curriculum in grades 7 and 8 is designed to give students a knowledge of the characteristics and functions, duties and rewards of specific clusters within a broad spectrum of occupational families. Youth at this age level have rather specific characteristics which suggest certain needs. For example, they have not had opportunities to explore their capabilities in various areas under a variety of situations; therefore, they need opportunities to self-appraise their emerging potentials, to analyze occupational information for decision making, to understand the importance of all types of work, and to learn the educational and occupational requirements of different jobs.

The curriculum organization in grades 7 and 8 will be characterized by studying occupational clusters across

FIGURE 1


ACADEMIC
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION COURSES
SPECIFIC VOCATIONAL COURSES
PRE-PROFESSIONAL COURSES
GENERAL
CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM
CAREER ORIENTATION PROGRAM
CAREER AWARENESS PROGRAM

content areas. The career orientation clusters will include manual and mechanical occupations; clerical, sales, and service occupations; and professional and technical occupations. In addition to integrating the entire curriculum at the grades 7 and 8 around career orientation, two hours per week in the seventh grade and three hours per week in the eighth grade will be used in studying the selected occupational clusters. These courses are to be taught by present teachers at the seventh and eighth grade levels.

Career Exploration (Grades 9 and 10)

The curriculum in grades 9 and 10 is characterized as exploratory. This involves exposure to actual work situations and, hopefully, "hands-on" experiences may be provided that are related to specific occupational clusters. The instructional material will be organized into units for more extensive study. Units for grades 9 and 10 will be selected from the following broad occupational areas:

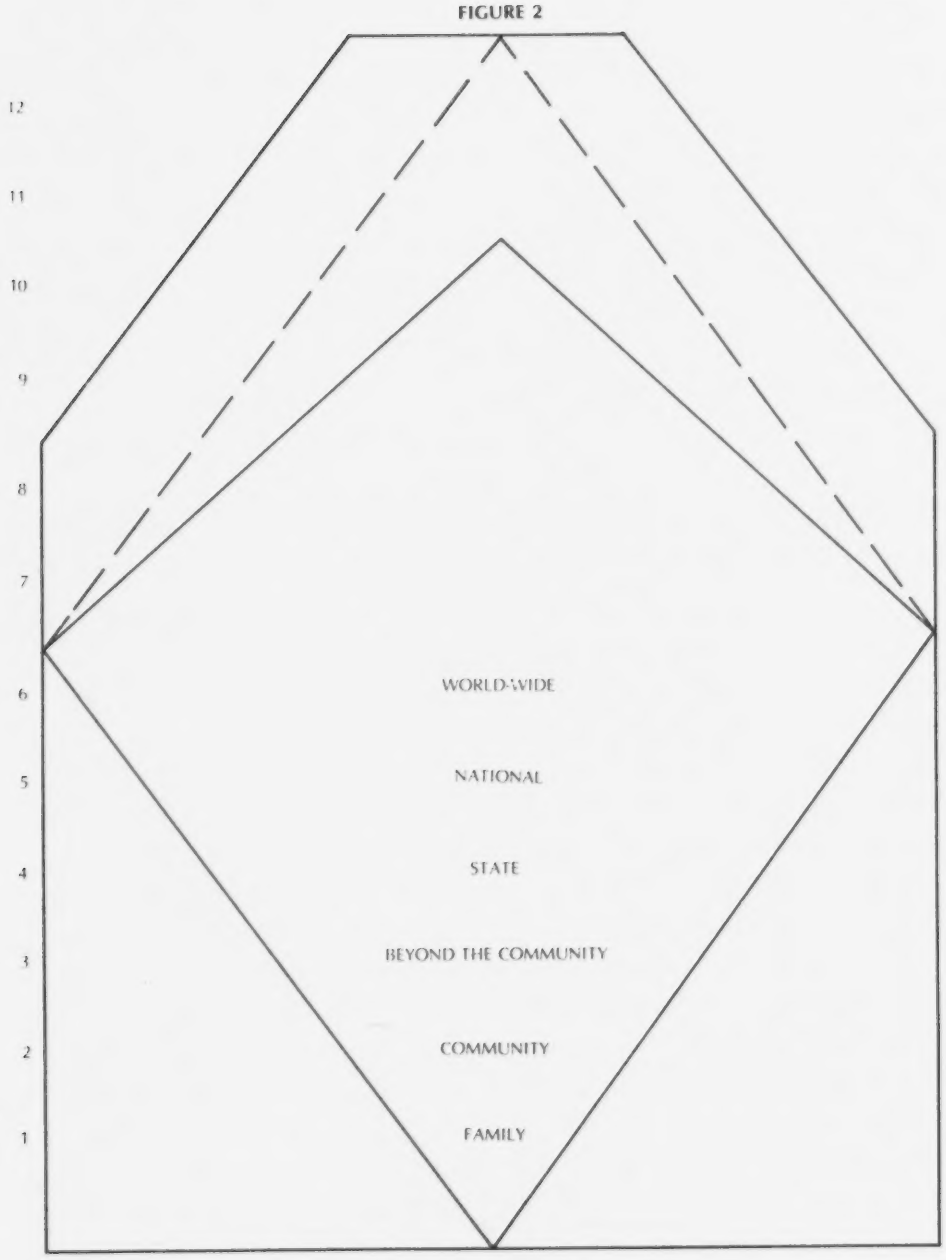
Manufacturing
Service
Professional
Construction
Technical
Business
Communication
Transportation

Career Preparation (Grades 11 and 12)

Three methods of student involvement will make up the curriculum in grades 11 and 12; (1) cooperative work experience, (2) specific vocational courses, and (3) pre-professional courses. The cooperative work experience will provide work stations in business and industry with related studies in the high school setting. The specific vocational courses will provide for study in specific content areas with the innovative opportunities for job "spin-off" at all levels within the occupational cluster. The pre-professional courses will provide laboratory settings in which saleable skills will be practiced. All courses will be planned to provide for students with varying levels of learning abilities.

For potential dropouts, dropouts, and high school graduates who have not acquired saleable skills, provisions will be made for intensive guidance, followed by intensive skill

FIGURE 2


12
11
10
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2
1
WORLD-WIDE
NATIONAL
STATE
BEYOND THE COMMUNITY
COMMUNITY
FAMILY

development. This preparation, guidance, and skill development may be provided in summer classes or other times during the year appropriate to student needs. A continued assessment will be made of labor market trends in the area of occupational changes through the Department of Labor (West Virginia Employment Security Service). The guidance and skill development will be held to a high correlation with job potential.

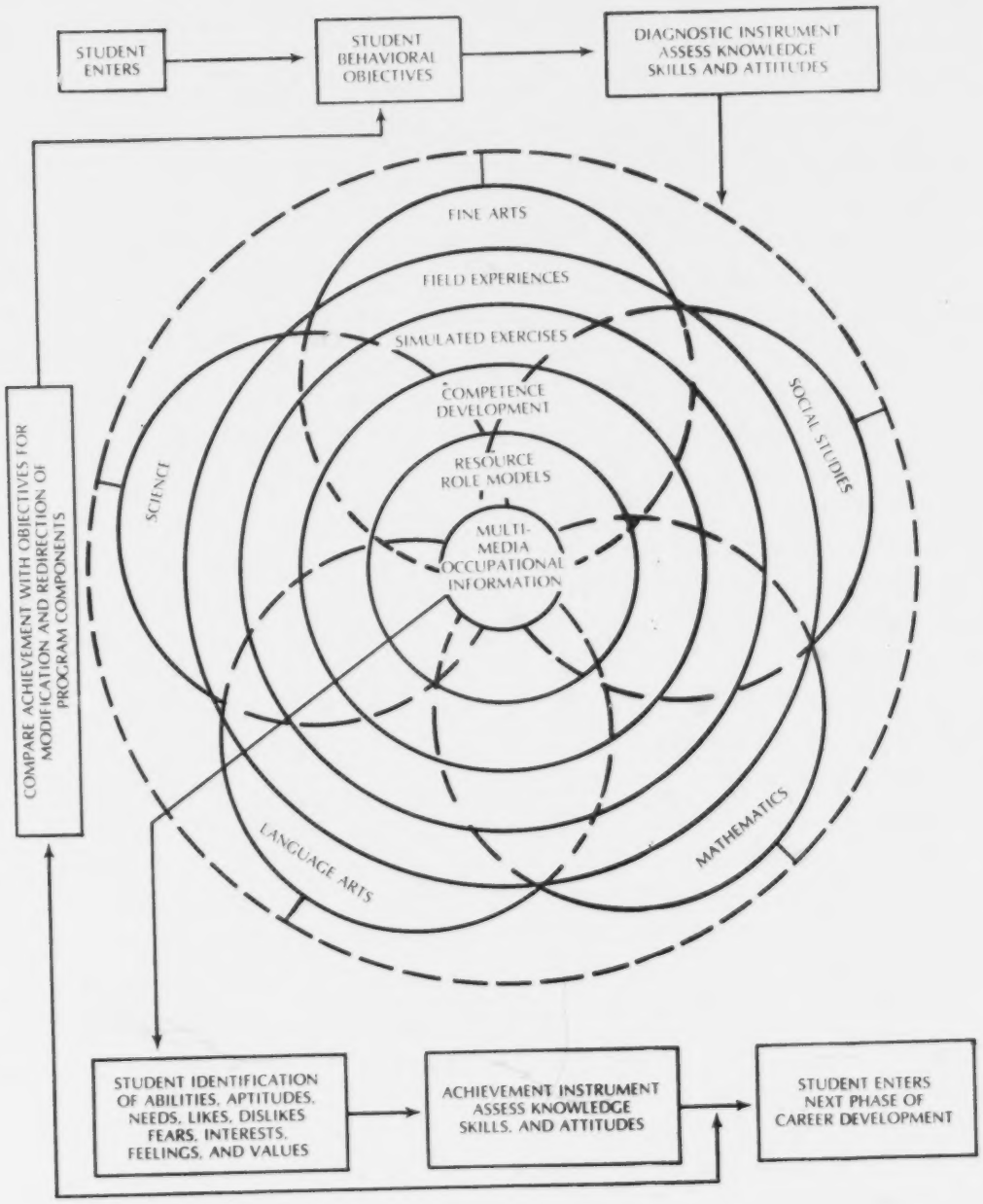
Following this intensive guidance and skill development, a follow-up study will be conducted on the job with counseling and job development training. Since Lincoln County traditionally is an area of high out migration, contract will be negotiated with other school districts to make the necessary follow-up of students employed in other counties, regions, and states when such units provide these services.

V.
CORRELATION OF ACADEMIC SUBJECTS AND USE OF EXPERIENCE BASED METHODOLOGY

The curriculum has become much more experience based providing students with opportunities for field experiences, competence development, simulations of occupations, contact with actual role models of various occupational persons, and access to a wide variety of multimedia occupational information. A curriculum blending approach has been taken, with the traditional academic subject matter areas organized around a career education theme, and using team teaching as a vehicle for implementation. The Lincoln County Career Awareness Curriculum Model emphasizes the student's entering the program at any given point among the academic alternatives and career education elements on the basis of the results of his contact with a diagnostic instrument which assesses his occupational knowledge, skill, and attitudes. Throughout his involvement he will have an opportunity to assess his acquisition of occupational knowledge skills and attitudes through the use of Achievement Instruments which will aid in identifying his abilities, aptitudes, needs, likes, dislikes, fears, interests, feelings, and values, with an opportunity for modification or re-cycling of his involvement in the curriculum if appropriate. Flexibility, involvement, and ex-

FIGURE 3

Lincoln County Career Awareness Model


STUDENT ENTERS
STUDENT BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES
DIAGNOSTIC INSTRUMENT ASSESS KNOWLEDGE SKILLS AND ATTITUDES
FINE ARTS
FIELD EXPERIENCES
SIMULATED EXERCISES
COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT
RESOURCE ROLE MODELS
MULTI-MEDIA OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION
SCIENCE
SOCIAL STUDIES
LANGUAGE ARTS
MATHEMATICS
COMPARE ACHIEVEMENT WITH OBJECTIVES FOR MODIFICATION AND REDIRECTION OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS
STUDENT IDENTIFICATION OF ABILITIES, APTITUDES, NEEDS, LIKES, DISLIKES FEARS, INTERESTS, FEELINGS, AND VALUES
ACHIEVEMENT INSTRUMENT ASSESS KNOWLEDGE SKILLS, AND ATTITUDES
STUDENT ENTERS NEXT PHASE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

perience are the key elements in the current curriculum approach. Figure 3 (Lincoln County Career Awareness Model) depicts this approach in a visual fashion.

VI.
STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

The exemplary staff composed of the project director and three coordinators obtained community support through formal and informal meetings with P.T.A. groups, business, civic and citizens groups. Various organizations, businesses, and community groups have been recruited to provide occupational resource persons to talk with students in the classroom, and for field trip sites. The strategy of involvement will be utilized continuously to assure the support necessary to insure program success. Teachers, students, school administrators, community leaders, employers, and parents will be further involved in effecting educational change. Concentrated in-service training accompanied by continuous professional development activities will continue to serve as the vehicle for involvement of educational personnel. Students and parent participation in conferences and counseling sessions and the expansion of the guidance program will be utilized to foster parent understanding and student participation in needs determination. The use of an advisory committee and community resources for work experience and cooperative education work stations is planned to cultivate community support and acceptance of the project, thus assuring its continuation beyond the time frame presently allocated.

The task prior to implementation also included training of professional personnel, conducting workshops and in-service training for teachers and administrators, reorganizing the curriculum, testing and advising students, developing model curriculum materials, establishing schedules, securing work stations, and performing other activities related to administration and supervision. Within the Lincoln County school system, the model adopted for the reorganized curriculum may be considered innovative. As such, Havelock's model for planned change was adopted.[1]

As one strategy for installation, exemplary staff identi-

[1] Ronald G. Havelock, "A Guide to Innovation." University of Michigan, January 20, 1971.

fied social systems within the county with particular emphasis upon the communication frequency and contact between individual families. The purpose of studying this aspect of the county was to identify the educational, political, economic, and social leaders. Educational leaders were asked to meet early in the discussions in order to assist in the change in the theoretical framework for the new curriculum design. The following sequence of steps have been followed:

(1) Identification of legitamizers
(2) Meetings with legitamizers
(3) Meetings of all teachers, supervisors, and administrators
(4) Identification training needs
(5) Development committees to study needed curriculum changes
(6) Committees developed new curriculum, guides, materials, and schedules by grade level groups.
(7) Workshop held for teachers and principals in seven pilot schools when the Career Education Program was initiated this fall. The workshop facilitated program assimilation through focusing on team building and organizational development, creation, teaching units, correlation and blending of academic subjects into a career awareness focus, and planning and administrative contingencies.

The implementation strategy also utilized a sequential phasing in of the career education concept, with grades 1-6 in seven pilot schools being involved in the fall of 1971, the county's remaining elementary schools and grades 7-8 in the spring of 1972, and grades 9-12 being brought in at the beginning of the 1972-73 school term.

VII.
INITIAL WORKSHOP EMPHASIZED BOTH TASK AND PROCESS ELEMENTS IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The faculty in the seven pilot schools selected for initial project implementation participated in a week long workshop just prior to the opening of the 1971-72 school term. Those involved were thirty-four teachers in grades 1-6, as well as principals from the schools.

FIGURE 4
Planned Organizational Development and Change
A Dual Emphasis

Orientation	Problems	Goals	Change Agent Role
Process	Poor Utilization of Group Resource Poor Problem Solving Procedures Powerlessness—low Influence Lack of intergroup linkages Dehumanized organization Non Involvement-Apathy Inept Leadership Communication Breakdowns Etc.	Increased Group and Organizational Competancy In the Process Dimensions necessary for Successful Task Implementation	Change Educator focuses on social systems, relationships, communication, co-operation and other people centered problem areas.
Task	Introduction of Career Awareness Program—Grades 1-6 Introduction of Career Orientation and Exploration Grades 7-10 Implementation of Vocational Courses—Grades 11-12. Job Placement	Specific Task Achievement Project Completion	Task or Informational Specialist who centers on Information, Subject Matter, Task.

Problems: Usually we think of group and organizational problems in the "task" category. In fact, in most groups and organizations, "process" problems also exist (e.g. undemocratic decision making), and may block any "task" action.

Goals: Process oriented goals seek development of problem solving abilities as well as solutions. This ability can be expressed in working on both process and task problems.

Change Agent Role: The change Educator is more "process" oriented, while the task specialist focuses on the "task." As a team they may combine the two models into one.

Many worthwhile innovative programs fail because of inadequate attention to the human relations or process phase of the project. Although technical and informational components are often highly functional and relevant, process problems may intervene to minimize the potential effectiveness of the effort. In order to avoid this barrier to program implementation the staff of the Lincoln County Exemplary Project organized the workshop around a dual approach, designed to focus on both human relations and technical skill elements. The model of planned Organizational Development and change shown in Figure 4 illustrates the dual emphasis of the Lincoln Workshop, and the strategy which project staff members plan to utilize in completing the total project.

The first day of the workshop, which ran for six hours daily, was devoted to staff and group development, team building and the creation of a consultative helping relationship between project coordinators and participating teachers. The framework for this session was a sequential group building process which took all participants through four basic stages of team development, from getting acquainted and trust building, to the formation of helping relationships, and finally group collaboration on a common task. Through the use of a modified laboratory training approach participants were divided into four groups, each with a leader trained in group dynamics. Experimental situations were created which allowed participants to be involved in, and learn firsthand about effective communication, consulting, problem solving, planning, feedback, group decision making, and team work.

The second day a model of career development education was presented in the total group with reaction and discussion following in the small groups that were built the first day. The model emphasized the sequential approach with first graders learning about occupations in the immediate family, and each grade broadening its perspective until sixth graders would be studying the interdependence of occupations on a world wide basis. Junior high orientation and exploration would lead to specific choices at the senior high level followed by post high school technical training, a job, or continued academic training. Also on the

second day a speaker from a similar project already in operation shared experiences and insights gained from the efforts of he and his staff. Again, the cohesive, unified groups created during the first day were able to share effectively the application of this presentation to implementation of the project in Lincoln County Schools.

On Wednesday, each of the four groups went through the process of developing a Career Awareness Unit that could be used in the Classroom, culminating in a role playing situation, in which the groups simulated typical roles played by the occupational persons on which the units focused. Each group observed the others in their role playing efforts, and then offered constructive feedback on positive and negative elements noted.

Thursday's session opened with a lecturette (short lecture) to the total group on unit development, including objectives, methodology, and important unit elements. The Lincoln County program emphasized the inclusion of six elements as being important in maximizing the effectiveness of each unit. These are field trips, use of a resource person from the occupation studied for a conference in the classroom with students, correlation of academic subjects, identification and study of related occupation including role playing and manipulative activity. The remainder of Thursday was spent with teachers divided by grade level developing actual units for use in the classroom during the school year. Units created by project staff were used as models. Project coordinators acted as consultants on procedural, technical, and process concerns of the groups.

On Friday, work was completed on the units, and the final afternoon session saw the seven school faculties meeting as a staff to plan around scheduling, correlation of subject matter and team teaching concerns, as well as issues involved in securing resources and materials. Initial units were selected for implementation during the first semester. Plans were also outlined for the maintenance of continued contact between central staff and teachers in a systematic consulting-helping relationship.

By the end of the workshop the various school staffs, both teachers and administrators were well organized and ready to begin the first semester of Career Awareness ac-

tivities in Lincoln County. Data gained from verbal contact with teachers and principals indicates that the two-pronged approach of the workshop resulted in the development of a cohesive, committed team of teachers, principals and central project personnel unified around the Career Awareness concept, with skills in the technical or informational aspect, as well as competence in such process areas as communications, cooperation and problem solving. Hopefully, this combination can be the key to a successful project which facilitates central staff and teacher integration, and accelerates the development and maintenance of teamwork and consensual behavior. The change model used in the workshop is congruent with Franklin's concept of the change Educators role; "the *problem* is not his sole concern. He is aware of the client system's *process* of development. He remains as sensitive to the organic life of the group as to its chosen target, for these are intertwined."[2]

VIII.
EVALUATION PLANS

Three basic methods of educational assessment will be used: (1) structured interviews, (2) instruments yielding quantitative and qualitative measures of cognitive and affective characteristics, and (3) instruments yielding comparative profiles. When available, and appropriate to measures germane to the stated objectives, standardized instruments will be used. (In the absence of standardized instruments appropriate to the measure of achievement and performance, instruments will be devised and constructed). Data gained from constructed instruments will enter into the evaluative model only after the reliability and validity of each instrument is determined.

IX.
INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

Although only a short time has elapsed since the In-Service Workshop many of the teachers in the seven pilot schools are well into units on various occupations. Use of Multi-Media Occupational Information, field trips, resource

[2] Franklin, Richard. *Toward The Style of The Community Change Educator.* Washington, D.C. NTL Institute, 1969, p. 17.

persons, and role playing and simulation of occupations are underway. Occupations studied thus far include postal workers, law enforcement, carpentry, transportation, banking, airline occupations, baking, television industry, crafts, and newspaper publication.

Teachers and principals indicated that absenteeism has taken a sharp drop, and that the enthusiasm of faculty and students alike has re-generated the educational adventure in a new and exciting way. More information will be gathered as the project progresses. Data gained thus far from teachers, students and administrators indicates that the Lincoln County Career Education Project is a significant breakthrough in efforts to humanize, individualize, and make more relevant an educational process that all too often has become a cold and alien venture, isolated from the excitement and reality of life.